

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2012

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Dan Buscher, Vice-Chairperson called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Dan Buscher Kurt Thornton
Glen Harris Kim Tuck
Mark Jones
Susan Baldwin (City Commission Liaison)

Members Excused: Doug Sofia and Mike Troutman

Staff Present: Glenn Perian, Senior Planner
Leona Parrish, Admin. Assistant

Vice-Chair Dan Buscher welcomed two new members to the Historic District Commission; Mr. Kim Tuck and Mr. Mark Jones.

ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO AGENDA: None

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:

Mr. Kurt Thornton asked what the acronym "SHPO" meant and that generally an acronym is spelled out prior to being used as an acronym; also noted that on page 4, first paragraph, Ms. Susan Bedsole's comments did not make sense to him. Mr. Perian stated the acronym "SHPO" stood for "State Historic Preservation Office" and it was noted that Ms. Bedsole's statement was taken from the recorded meeting minutes as stated and would be reviewed and clarified for better understanding.

MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. KURT THORNTON TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JANUARY 9, 2012 MEETING WITH REQUESTED CHANGES NOTED; SECONDED BY MR. GLEN HARRIS.

ALL IN FAVOR, NONE OPPOSED MOTION; MOTION CARRIED.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Vice-Chair Buscher stated that items A, B, C, & D are applications submitted by the Land Bank, and unless there is an objection the commission would like to hear about them all at once and asked if there is anyone present to speak: Ms. Krista Trout-Edwards, Calhoun County Land Bank came forward and Mr. Buscher asked if Ms. Trout-Edwards could review them numerically, as it would be helpful.

A) 100 Walter Avenue - (Request to Demolish)

Ms. Krista Trout-Edwards, Calhoun County Land Bank stated this property sits on the corner of Walter and Wilks Street and is registered on the City of Battle Creek's web site as a Dangerous Building. Said they acquired this property through tax foreclosure process and boarded this property up at least three times and responded to some issues. Said they had decided that with this property and some others in this area they would do a survey of the property with the Land Bank staff and Mr. Kim Tuck who is NSP2 Coordinator for the City of Battle Creek, to review the structures integrity and whether it would be possible to rehab or market them to someone who would be interested in rehabbing the properties. Said the property at 100 Walter Ave. was gutted inside with structure issues with the flooring and because it is a corner lot that is small there is no room to add a garage or onsite parking and felt that with Mr. Tucks rehab estimate of \$137,000 that it would make more sense to demolish that property and see if any of the adjacent property owners would be interested in purchasing the lot.

B) 36 Wilkes Street - (Request to Demolish)

Ms. Krista Trout-Edwards, Calhoun County Land Bank stated this property had a similar survey done and found it did not look too bad from the outside but discovered in the basement it had severely damaged beams done by termites, so much that some of the joist had been eaten through and based on what they could see, the damage they could not see was much more extensive and could not sell this property in good faith to anyone in the condition it was in currently; and for those reasons ask for the demolition of this property as well.

C) 21 Hanover Street - (Request to Demolish)

Ms. Krista Trout-Edwards noted that 21 and 13 Hanover Street was looked at together and then separately and what was happening in that area. Noted both properties were acquired this year (2011) through tax foreclosure and that 21 Hanover St. had been converted to a two-unit illegally in the past with no fire separation and does not meet code; in addition all the electrical systems and mechanical systems such as plumbing are out of date. Said the house currently has a 60 amp knob and tube electrical system and that today's code requires 100 amps and would need to be updated. Said the plumbing was a mix match with some broken and would need looked at and probably extensively repaired; in addition there is some ceiling and water damage inside and they had looked to see what the cost would be to make it pristine and also for somebody to rehab, the numbers showed that it would make more sense to seek the demolition on this one with even a modest rehab it would be \$90,000 dollars and would exceed what you could sell that property for in that neighborhood. Stated the Land Bank owns 21 Hanover St. which has a through lot to Buckeye St. and also own a lot between 21 and 13 Hanover, so they thought they may keep those parcels for a possible rebuilt as there are also some Battle Creek Housing Commission and Habitat homes in the area; said in speaking with Battle Creek Housing Commission they were in favor of the demolitions as it would increase the value of their homes.

D) 13 Hanover Street - (Request to Demolish)

Ms. Krista Trout-Edwards stated this property is a little different than 21 Hanover St. as it has an older sagging roof, outdated mechanical components, deteriorated siding which also includes asbestos siding with the rear portion of the house, and has settled significantly to where the ceiling has collapsed with an inadequate roof. Said they have found during the survey that there were significant repairs needed for the stairs as well as the windows and that this property is also cited as a vacant and abandoned building.

Ms. Trout-Edwards stated they are here to answer any questions and agree with the staff report; that they have met the conditions for demolition for the (4) above noted properties.

Vice-Chair Dan Buscher asked if the any of the commissioners had any questions at this time for the petitioner.

Mr. Kurt Thornton asked how the Land Bank came up with the year 1920's being the year these properties were built as he knows they were built around the same time the Sanitarium was built which was 1800's. Ms. Trout-Edwards stated the information was taken from the City of Battle Creek's Assessors records and assumed they were correct.

Mr. Mark Jones asked about the repair estimates for the asbestos, lead testing, survey, civil engineering and the general demo costs; said they looked to be not quite accurate and noted that for 15 years he was a structural engineer and had done asbestos abatement. Ms. Krista Trout-Edwards asked if it was the testing or abatement he questioned; Mr. Jones stated the testing. Ms. Trout-Edwards stated they had procured someone through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program #2 (NSP2) and had a set price unless there were a lot of extra samples; so the \$600 dollars represents the price for asbestos and lead testing and would go up if they had to take other samples based \$8.00 per sample. Said if they do a demolition they would still need an asbestos test and not a lead test and that starting price is \$360 dollars. Noted that the survey and civil engineer cost, she would assume was the property survey; but not sure and asked Mr. Tuck to provide an answer. Mr. Tuck stated it was a cost that was in his template and would need removed. Ms. Trout-Edwards said, therefore it would not be done.

Mr. Jones stated regarding asbestos; it was a good explanation and if they bid the entire NSP it would make sense to divide it by structures and looks good. Said regarding the construction demolition it has a unit quantity of \$2 per sq. ft. and a unit price of \$2,500 and what he understands it should be a volumetric measurement and ask that it be changed from (per square feet) to (per cubic feet) and list it as it would be calculated. Ms. Trout-Edwards stated yes, they can make that change.

Mr. Jones stated regarding the date of the homes being built; said that as a local historian the Sanitarium was built in 1902 and radically changed what was being done in the northeast side which was actually mostly park-land that was very beautiful as shown in pictures that were taken. Noted they then developed and built homes closer to the park and they tend to be newer than the homes further to the west because it was just open park-land and because of the new construction of the hospital was much larger than the old one; they needed more housing.

Mr. Kurt Thornton stated that Washington Heights was mostly built in the late 1800's and he would guess that most of those homes were in the late 1800's or early 1900's.

Vice-Chair Dan Buscher asked if there were any questions regarding 36 Wilkes St. – Seeing None

Vice-Chair Dan Buscher asked if there were any questions regarding 21 Hanover Street.

Mr. Jones asked if because 21 Hanover was behind the properties for the Battle Creek Housing Commission would they be selling the property to make a lot that would go entirely through or if that entire area would be a Housing Commission area. Ms. Krista Trout-Edwards stated the lot does already go entirely through from Hanover to Buckeye Street and she had not spoken to them

to see if they wished to build any more homes in the area; if so the Land Bank could hold them to see if any non-profit would be interested in any new construction, as the other homes in the area are in good condition and in thinking long term it might make sense to do some reinvestment in this area.

Vice-Chair Mr. Buscher asked if there were any questions regarding 13 Hanover Street. – None

Mr. Kim Tuck stated he would need to abstain from vote regarding the properties on the agenda today as he works for the NSP2 and provided the repair cost estimates for the County Land Bank.

Mr. Glenn Harris asked regarding 36 Wilkes Street application having the attached demolition estimate form stating it was for 291 N. Washington. Ms. Trout-Edwards stated that was a clerical error on the report and should have stated 36 Wilkes Street.

Vice-Chair Buscher asked that one motion be made regarding the four properties on today's agenda requesting a notice to proceed for demolition.

MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. KURT THORNTON TO APPROVE THE NOTICE TO PROCEED FOR THE DEMOLITION OF STRUCTURES LOCATED AT 100 WALTER AVENUE; 36 WILKES STREET; 21 HANOVER STREET; AND 13 HANOVER STREET AS EACH OF THEM MEET STANDARDS #1 AND #3 OUTLINED IN CHAPTER 1470.09 (e); SECONDED BY MR. GLEN HARRIS.

ROLL VOTE TAKEN: FOUR IN FAVOR (HARRIS, THORNTON, BUSCHER AND JONES); ONE ABSTAINED (TUCK); NONE OPPOSED; MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS AND STAFF:

Mr. Kurt Thornton welcomed the two new members who was present today and asked Mayor Baldwin if his seat on the Historic District Commission was filled by one of the two new appointments present at today's meeting. Mayor Baldwin stated she is still working on filling his seat and that the two new members Kim Tuck and Mark Jones were replacements for Heather Lane-Fowler and Jan Hatch.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Dan Buscher, Vice-Chair adjourned meeting at 4:25 P.M.

Submitted by: Leona A. Parrish, Administrative Assistant, Planning Department